

Celebrating 50 Years at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum

April 21 – October 28, 2012

***Creating the Legacy: 50 Years of the
Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum***

Dining with the President

Ideas of Lincoln and Hoover



Hoover enjoying the new museum with his grandchildren

West Branch, Iowa –The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum will open ***Celebrating 50 Years at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum*** on April 21, 2012. Featuring three sections, this exhibit will give a glimpse into some of the elements that define a presidency. ***Creating the Legacy, Dining with the President*** and ***Ideas of Lincoln and Hoover*** will each highlight a different aspect of what it means to be president. The Museum is celebrating 50 years as an institution, and also celebrating the man who served as our 31st president.

Creating the Legacy

If only these walls could talk! The Hoover Presidential Library-Museum was dedicated to the American people on August 10, 1962, on President Hoover's 88th birthday. Herbert Hoover gave his last public address at the dedication of the museum in 1962.

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum was built by the Herbert Hoover Birthplace Foundation with private funds. The building and the original 28 acre Hoover Park were deeded to the federal government in 1964. The Hoover Museum has had 4 additions since the dedication in 1962, originally the building was less than 10,000 square feet but after the last addition in 1992 it measures just over 47,000 square feet.

Franklin Roosevelt was the first president to have a Library-Museum, it was dedicated in 1939, Truman followed in 1957, Eisenhower in May of 1962 and Hoover in August of 1962. Herbert Hoover is the oldest president to have a Library-Museum that is operated by the National Archives and Records Administration.

The Library-Museum has welcomed millions of visitors and served thousands of researchers since it opened. This section tells about the history of the building.

Dining with the President

This section will feature White House china and menus from a select number of presidents. Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover used the china from the Woodrow Wilson administration (as did Harding and Coolidge). The Hoovers entertained while living in the White House but largely out of their own pocket.

This is a favorite story about the Hoovers dining in the White House. *"...A luncheon originally planned for a few delegates to a national conference expanded when other delegates decided on a spur of the moment visit to the White House and also had to be accommodated. There was no polite alternative; so what began as luncheon for four suddenly became an event for forty. The cook had to do some quick thinking. She went through the ice-box, put together all the left-overs, ground them up and made them into small rolls called croquettes. A distinguished foreign guest present that day asked for the recipe. The cook quickly named the new dish White House Surprise Supreme! Although the story survives to this day, only the name of the recipe is known -- the ingredients are lost to history."* (Croquette is a small fried food roll.)

Ideas of Lincoln and Hoover

Herbert Hoover admired Abraham Lincoln, viewing the 16th President as the standard of excellence for the office. Thirty-two letters from the private collection of Benjamin Shapell reveal different character traits in Abraham Lincoln. The Shapell Collection is rarely made available to the public, offering a once in a lifetime opportunity to view these items. Many of these letters are in Lincoln's own hand while others are written by notable figures such as Frederick Douglass, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Harry Truman, and Gerald Ford, noting Lincoln's greatness. A comparison of these traits is made in selections from Hoover's own writings. Hoover frequently referenced Lincoln in many of his public addresses and, in partnership with Mrs. Hoover, re-established Lincoln's office space in the White House which Hoover used as his own work space.

On opening day, April 21, 2012 the Hoover Museum and the Hoover National Historic Site will host the event, Kites over Hoover Park. Everyone is invited to bring their kite to fly from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Benjamin Franklin will be present from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Kites will be flown at the farm west of the Hoover Park, please call 319-643-5301 for more information. There will be free admission to the museum on this day.

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum is one of thirteen museums administered by the National Archives and Records Administration and is located in West Branch, Iowa ¼ mile off Interstate 80 at Exit 254. Regular museum hours are

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. daily. For more information call 319-643-5301 or check the website at www.hoover.archives.gov.